

reading diary within walking distance

Walking is as old as the spirit of man. We walk for many different reason and purposes, some esoteric others practical. Walking fulfills the human need to travel, but it also can be performed as a meditation. These two can be bound together in complex ways either directly or indirectly, as in derives or pilgrimages. Sometime the journey of walking can transform into other forms of exploration. Climbing is an extension of walking, a vertical journey. Parading and marching hold elements of exhibition celebration and connection, but can also be used for expression and protest. And then of coarse we have internal journeys such as those drugs, alcohol and the transcendent states which sex and sickness may awaken.

The Peace Pilgrim used walking as a way of bringing compassion and wisdom to others. In modern America the walker is vulnerable, humble and perhaps even considered an outcast. Very few walk along our roads and those who do are often the victim of poverty or madness, yet there are those who choose to travel on foot without being prisoners of condition. The Peace Pilgrim's journey of thousands of miles on foot living off alms was the outward manifestation of her own inner peace. To walk for miles is an act of patience, an exclamation of one's love of existence. It also allows intimate interaction with the environment and its inhabitants. As Milissa Bookhart says it is a way of immersing oneself in the messiness of terrestrial living. Walking your feet touch the ground, you nose faces the scents and stenches, you are not separated from the environment by a metal skin or an air conditioner and pollen filter.

We also journey for purposes and in pursuit of self interest. Many artist look to achieve recognition/support and as Nicolas writes this search can become a pilgrimage. The artist looks for alms to make possible their journey and hopefully will in the process in rich the lives of those who come across the pilgrim and his story/work/props.

I am particularly interested in the *Theory of Derive*, which is a complex and hard to objectify phenomenon. It seems a journey to answer a question yet unknown. It like the marvelous Aleph Borges witnessed in the cellar contains many overlapping experiences and connects memory desire and the present. I find derive interesting as a wire walker. To walk on the wire is a sort of derive and an Aleph. In each step on the wire is contained every step that I have ever taken. Thousands of movements are voiced though a single movement. It becomes a trained improvisation. Profoundly intense, lonely, and violent the equilibrist struggles on a alien stage disconnected from his evolutionary designs, reminiscent of Baudrillard's impressions of New York. The funambulist is witness to his own frenetic mind as he balances along the metallic catenary. The wire hovering across a void reaches out tracing a narrow bridge through space. A bridge that connects two towers, two sides of a canyon, the acrobat and the audience, and heart and mind. The inhuman towers reaching into clouds, the broad avenues choked with cars belching exhaust, blaring their horns in protest of pause, our great metropolises in their inorganic splendor voice a song of human endeavor. The marathon runner runs to "do it" the engineer builds to "span it" but our best endeavors ultimately escape purpose and become more manifestations of inner initiative, to be, to feel, to see.

To only seek things outwardly purposeful leaves us boarding up our valuable gardens for the parade, divorcing our humanity, extinguishing a love of existence. To travel by purpose which is like the aleph, overlapping, simultaneous, and indescribable is an art to fill and illuminate the void, to form the formless, a process of committing that which does not exist and as such cannot yet be pursued.